May 12, 1952

Dr. D. M. Bonner
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Dear Dave:

I have just received Lester's paper on the galactosidase of mutant K-12 for review from the Archives.

On the whole it is a well-written paper— much better than Otto Landman's, and my only suggestions were motivated by the editors' request that I recommend what parts of it could be more economically presented.

There is one feature about it that I preferred not to take up with the editors, but directly with you. I hope you will have an opportunity to discuss this with Lester before the revised paper is sent to press.

The cultures used are brought in ad hoc, and there is no discussion of the place of his results against the general background of work (that is, ours) on the subject. Several of the genetic statements: the non-allelism of W-45 with Y-53, and the identity of Y-70, are completely undocumented. I am less concerned with priority than with having this paper make sense.

By the time you get this, the 1951 CSH volume should be available. Lester might even correct my statement that Lac_2- (W-45) is completely deficient in lactase. There is also a considerable discussion of related issues in my chapter in Genetics in the 20th Century. Don't you think that this paper would be more useful if it were more explicitly correlated with parallel studies?

In case there is any ambiguity in the record, Y-53 and W-45 are UV mutants from Y-10 and 58-161 respectively. Y-70 was isolated from Y-53, after UV, as a stable derivative. Esther's genetic analysis, from which she concluded that it represents a stable allele at the same locus, is recorded briefly in the CSH ms., more fully in her Ph.D. thesis, and in a paper in press "Allelic relationships and reverse mutation in Escherichia coli." If you'd like, Esther says she'll be glad to send a copy for a reasonable time. I hope that it was appropriate for me to write directly to you; I thought you'd be in a better position to advise Lester on a proper course. If we ever make any comparable errors, I hope you'll bring it to our attention.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg